

Bureau of Mint gets new name, 111 years later

By Roger Boye

Bureau of the Mint—the 111-year-old name of Uncle Sam's coin-making business—is getting axed by officials in the Reagan administration.

Much better, they insist, is "United States Mint," the new name that's less confusing and has no offensive words.

"The bureau designation conjures up too many negative images of the stereotyped bureaucrat, images which do not fit our new, aggressive marketing programs," said Donna Pope, mint director. The new identification took effect Jan. 25, after getting the approval of Donald Regan, treasury secretary.

The executives also think the new name will read better in advertising copy, clearly establishing the origin of government coins and medals. In recent years, many private companies have adopted official-sounding titles that have confused some consumers: titles such as "U.S. Coin Exchange," "Federal Monetary Center" and the "National Historic Coin Center."

"After all, in the United States, there is only one United States Mint," Mrs. Pope said in a letter to mint employees announcing the change. She also praised their efforts in making the federal government a profit of more than \$238 million last year by selling coins, medals and gold medallions.

An act of Congress established the mint in 1792, and subsequent legislation referred to it as the "Mint of the United States." In 1873, the mint officially became a bureau within the Treasury Department.

Meanwhile, in the latest addition to an ongoing government program, mint workers are selling to collectors a medal depicting composer and musical director Fred Waring. Each 1½-inch bronze specimen duplicates a congressional gold medal that President Reagan presented to Waring in recognition of "the pleasure given countless admirers through music and song."

To order, send \$2.25 per medal to the United States Mint, 55 Mint St., San Francisco, Calif. 94175.

Kingpin rarities continue to sell well despite the generally sour coin market, judging by the results of the latest glamor auction.

Investors paid \$264,000 for a 1794 silver dollar and \$198,000 for an 1804 dollar during a New York sale last month conducted by Stack's Coin Co. The 1,798-lot auction realized nearly \$8.7 million, a respectable average of almost \$5,000 per piece.

More than 500 collectors attended the four-day sale despite horrible weather. The coins were part of the collection of Amon G. Carter Jr., publisher of the Ft. Worth Star-Telegram who died in 1982.